

## Joint U.S.-EU Statement on “Early Warning” Mechanism

Date : June 21, 1999

### U.S.-EU Early Warning and Problem Prevention Principles and Mechanisms

The Transatlantic Declaration of 1990, the New Transatlantic Agenda of 1995, the Transatlantic Partnership for Political Cooperation of 1998, and the Transatlantic Economic Partnership Statement and Action Plan of 1998 collectively provide the framework for a vast, cooperative relationship between the United States and the European Union. At the same time, they provide the framework for managing our bilateral differences.

Both sides nevertheless agree that there is a need to coordinate better, both internally and bilaterally, in order to strengthen both the principles and mechanisms that will enable us to identify and prevent potential bilateral U.S.-EU problems at an early stage. We are taking steps with a view to doing so, and will take further steps to improve the process as warranted. This would meet the legitimate expectations of our citizens at a time of an increasingly interdependent economic relationship and closer political cooperation.

We will strive to prevent conflicts and facilitate problem resolution before they risk undermining the broader U.S.-EU relationship. Some of these issues are clearly economic/trade-related, others are clearly political or global. Still others overlap across these categories.

We have at our disposal two principal bodies, which will coordinate their efforts, to provide early warning and facilitate resolution of transatlantic issues, including at the political level if necessary: the Transatlantic Economic Partnership (TEP) Steering Group and the New Transatlantic Agenda (NTA) Task Force. The Steering Group will primarily cover trade and investment issues; the Task Force will primarily cover other issues. This does not preclude early warning or problem resolution through other channels. As the body responsible for oversight of U.S.-EU relations, the Senior Level Group (SLG) will review early-warning items in its preparation for the U.S.-EU Summit.

Early warning is intended to improve the capacity of each side to take the other side's interests into account at an early stage when formulating policy, legislative, or regulatory decisions, without thereby limiting each side's existing decision-making autonomy. Both sides re-affirm that the processes proposed hereafter are without prejudice to the parties' rights and obligations relating to international dispute settlement, notably under the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

We will use the following means to identify, provide early warning of, and facilitate the resolution of problems:

- a) The bedrock for early warning is transparency. This is provided for by information exchange as part of the existing foreign policy dialogue and by regulatory cooperation and mutual consultation being set up by different TEP working groups. This will not prevent any side from raising actively concerns as regards policy, legislative, or regulatory proposals under consideration by the other

side.

- b) Any issue which might have an impact on U.S.-EU relations may be raised. Each side will consult on issues raised by the other side.
- c) Each side will seek to ensure that its internal procedures enable it to detect at an early stage trade, other economic, diplomatic, and global issues that have a transatlantic dimension, including policy, legislative, or rule-making initiatives. This should involve full communication between its own technical experts and policy officials, to ensure that its internal procedures enable it to fulfill this objective.
- d) Potential trade and investment problems identified in the above process, both within and without the range of activities envisioned in the TEP Action Plan, should be brought to the attention of the TEP Steering Group. Diplomatic, global, and other problems should be brought to the attention of the NTA Task Force. This process includes the May 18, 1998 Transatlantic Partnership on Political Cooperation.
- e) The TEP Steering Group and NTA Task Force will be tasked with ensuring appropriate follow-up procedures for items reported to them that have a potential for transatlantic policy frictions, notably by assigning contact points, facilitating consultations and agreeing on timelines for reporting back.
- f) In its role in preparing for the U.S.-EU bilateral Summits, the SLG will identify problems which may need to be discussed by Leaders, primarily on the basis of inputs provided by the TEP Steering Group and the NTA Task Force.
- g) We will invite the Transatlantic Legislators' (TLD), Business (TABD), Consumer (TACD), Environment (TAED), and Labor (TALD) Dialogues to contribute to this effort by identifying problems and offering proposals for resolution.